

Utilities and Sustainability Task Force
Minutes from the 1/18/07 Meeting

Next meeting: Feb. 15, 2007

In attendance:

Deborah Gordon, Mayor of Woodside
Barbara Pierce, Mayor of Redwood City
Terry Nagel, Mayor of Burlingame
Bill Dickenson, Belmont City Council
Jerry Hill, San Mateo County Board of Supervisors
Bruce Chamberlain, ABAG Energy Watch
Kathy Lavezzo, PG&E
Nicole Sandkulla, BAWSCA
Richard Napier, C/CAG
Bob Cormia, Sustainable Silicon Valley
Kim Springer, San Mateo County RecycleWorks (staff)
Dianne Anderson, San Mateo County RecycleWorks (new staff)
Gina Blus, Facilitator (staff)

Not in attendance:

Mario Panoringan, Colma-Daly City Chamber of Commerce
Sepi Richardson, Brisbane City Council
Mukesh Khattar, Oracle

Guests:

Joe La Mariana, San Mateo County RecycleWorks
Jerry Lahr, ABAG Energy Watch Program Lead
Eric Pawlowsky, Legislative Aide to Sup. Jerry Hill
Jill Boone, member emeritus

Action items

All:

1. if possible, please try to arrive a few minutes before 3 pm. Our next several meetings should have very full agendas.
2. send any updates on your info (new title, phone number or email address) to Gina

Elected officials:

1. provide any feedback on the Collaboration/Communication proposal to Kathy Lavezzo, KOL1@pge.com office phone (650) 598-7267 cell (650) 279-3864
2. Review the new CMEQ document and give feedback to Gina no later than **Friday, Feb. 9**

Bruce:

1. provide any info available on the amount and level of city staff needed to engage with the Energy Watch program

2. provide any prepared responses to objections raised (by staff or officials) against participating in the Energy Watch program, if available

Staff:

1. revise CMEQ memo to address items below
2. prepare one-page summary to accompany the memo
3. find a way to share information on events of interest to the task force

Consent calendar

The December minutes were approved.

Notes

Update on Collaboration/Communication Process

Kathy Lavezzi met with PG&E stakeholders from the multiple sections that are involved in construction, maintenance and repair activities about which local officials wish to be warned (transmission, substation, maintenance and distribution). The effort to find, pull together and disseminate information to cities about pending projects in a timely manner is a complex undertaking.

The tentative proposal calls for PG&E to provide a quarterly report to each city that identifies the major upcoming projects for that jurisdiction. The information would be gathered and distributed by PG&E's Government Relations department, both to an elected official and a senior staff member in each city. Because of staffing issues, the program would not start until Q2.

Task force members were generally pleased with the plan's outline, but asked how time-sensitive information might be handled and how the process would address any objection or problems. Kathy noted that the Government Relations department is PG&E's conduit for communicating with cities. Task force members should call Kathy with questions or to provide input on the proposal.

Task force members also suggested proactive communication by PG&E about common problems and responses that might be experienced during storm season, for example, that the cities could send out in their newsletters or otherwise disseminate. Other discussion included an interest in a "central notification" system anytime a utility-related permit is applied for at any city in the county.

CMEQ Presentation

USTF's update is on CMEQ's schedule for its 2/26 meeting. Richard advised that the presentation should last 15 minutes, leaving at least 15 minutes for Q&A. Staff should prepare a single-page document that quickly communicates the overall message as a companion piece to the in-depth report.

Discussion on CMEQ memo

Generally, the task force directed that the CMEQ memo be revised as follows:

- Make clear that the task force has done significant investigation and is bringing options to the cities so they can pick and choose; we are not dictating what cities should do
- Include a statement that brings the message home and causes readers to look in the mirror: this problem affects us all, and we are all part of the solution. Everyone can do something about this problem.
- Inform and persuade
- Readers need to feel it's manageable; point to resources
- Add local evidence of climate change
- Make the highlights very factual and very local
- Add a new cover memo that states clearly what we are trying to accomplish
- Include a sample resolution asking all the cities to work with us; after C/CAG approval, work to get all the cities to adopt it
- Recommend that CMEQ ask C/CAG to approve the report and send it to all cities, encouraging them to adopt the resolution
 - this will provide good PR and an opportunity for task force members to follow up with the cities
- Be specific about what we want the cities to do: review the materials, participate in the developing the Energy Plan, adopt the resolution and begin implementing
- Specify the criteria that will be used to determine which programs will be included in the Energy Plan
- Clarify the meaning of the term “price signals” and the reference to peaker power plants. [update: Kathy Lavezzo reports that the planned peaker plant for SFO will be a natural gas turbine, one of the cleanest possible fossil fuel plants. The 50 megawatt facility is being developed by San Francisco; PG&E is only working on the interconnect tying it to the grid. The plant is expected to run 50% of the time.]

Discussion

It is appropriate to call for the development of clean energy sources; action is already underway with Pacifica’s biodiesel plant and a hydrogen fueling station in Millbrae. However, it is too early to ask for conceptual approval of a new entity to manage and oversee utility issues; it is more suitable to go into the final report, but OK to raise the issue now.

At the end of this process, the Energy Plan will set forth actions for cities. It may also suggest that C/CAG take action to help cities implement the Energy Plan.

ABAG Energy Watch Overview

Bruce Chamberlain presented an overview and examples of specific energy-saving services available to cities at no cost through the ABAG Energy Watch program.¹

¹ Bruce’s presentation is posted on the USTF website under Task Force Reports, at http://www.ccag.ca.gov/ustf_task_force_reports.html.) Professor Krosnick’s research on public opinion regarding climate change, cited in Bruce’s presentation, can be found at under the 10/25/06 [A Favorable Climate for Climate Action](#) event in the Archives section of Sustainable Silicon Valley website.

Discussion

- commissioning and retro-commissioning buildings is an extremely important way to save energy, since even new buildings can have systems that are installed incorrectly or functioning improperly, and older buildings are almost certain to need tuning
- the Energy Watch program can be used for any local government facility, though bigger facilities offer bigger opportunities for savings
- few cities have taken advantage of these services (only four in San Mateo County, plus the county itself) because it has been difficult to get the attention of the cities, and other priorities have taken precedence
- champions within the city structure are critical to ensuring that the Energy Watch program is treated as a priority; having elected official champion the program makes an enormous difference
 - are there any prepared responses to common objections?
- some staff time is required to work with the consultants, put a project out to bid, etc.
 - can the level of expertise and amount of staff time needed be quantified?
- cities often struggle to find the capital needed to make the recommended improvements (though low-cost loans are available)
- the program can help cities develop Climate Action Plans to the extent they address energy efficiency
- PG&E runs separate energy efficiency programs for schools
- anyone that is authorized to do so according to the city's own rules can sign up for the program
- program resources are allocated on a first-come, first-served basis, but if need be, the program manager will seek additional funds to meet the needs of all cities requesting services
- Richard planned to take the materials at the City Managers meeting on 1/19 to encourage more participation

Roundtable

- The Stanford Terrace Hotel (near Stanford Hospital) in Palo Alto now offers green rooms and is becoming a green hotel. The green rooms are always booked.
- Sustainable Silicon Valley is offering a green financing program for cities on 1/25.
- Sustainable Spaces is offering a 3-day training in San Francisco on 2/26, 2/27 and 3/5 to train residential energy auditors; it might be suitable for city staff.
- a new environmental committee in the county was proposed, but later tabled

Future meeting topics

February: more ways for cities to save money, energy and water, and reduce GHGs

March: ways for cities to drive behavioral change through their regulatory powers

April: ways for cities to partner with nonprofits, universities and the private sector to stimulate economic growth and to influence behavior in their communities

May: ways for cities to educate and change behaviors of their populace